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## **St. Lucie I.N.T.A.C.T.** ***An Inspired Network to Achieve Community Together***

December 11, 2006  
Laura Alexander, Public Relations Chair  
St. Lucie INTACT  
(772) 489-5676

For more information, contact:  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **DONATIONS NEEDED TO HELP ELDERLY RECOVER AND PREPARE!**

Fort Pierce – December 11, 2006 – St. Lucie Inspired Network to Achieve Community Together (INTACT), the county's long term recovery organization, is in need of donations, building materials, and volunteers. INTACT was awarded funds through the Florida Hurricane Relief Fund and the State of Florida to assist lower income homeowners, including the elderly and persons with disabilities, to better prepare their homes to withstand hurricanes. In order to meet the goals set by the grant, INTACT must identify other community resources to match these funds. Long Term Recovery Coordinator, Stefanie Myers, stated "We have over 80 families already qualified for the program and hope that the community will be able to assist in getting those homes repaired and hardened in whatever way they can. Contributions of building materials, financial donations and volunteer time are desperately needed."

Each identified recipient will receive a free home inspection provided through FLASH.org with funds provided by the Department of Financial Services through the My Safe Florida Home program. The inspection will provide homeowners with a clear assessment of how prepared their homes are for future storms, identify steps that could be taken to harden the home and provide a cost estimate for those steps. INTACT is waiting for the results from inspections to move ahead with the actual construction work in January. Mitigation is defined as home modifications that make a home more resistant to wind damage. This may include installation of hurricane shutters, repair/replacement of doors/windows, and upgrades to roofing to minimize damage from wind and rain. Low income homeowners with insurance are able to get additional information through the website at [www.stlucieco.gov/community/intact.htm](http://www.stlucieco.gov/community/intact.htm) or by calling 462-2093. Those who do not meet the income limitations can apply directly to the state program at [www.mysafefloridahome.com](http://www.mysafefloridahome.com).

"Now that we are two years post hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, INTACT is moving its focus from disaster recovery to one of preparation and mitigation. This step is critical to better prepare St. Lucie County for future storms and also to aid in lowering the insurance rates for the state," stated Al Rivett, chair of INTACT and the Executive Director for Habitat for Humanity. "Although we did not have any damaging storms this year, we continue to need assistance from the community to better prepare St. Lucie County for future storms." INTACT is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations made to the organization are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

INTACT has already started a community partnership to provide mitigation training for residents. The organization is working with the University of Florida Hurricane House to provide training to any area resident who is interested in learning more about wind resistance construction. The training demonstrates window shuttering systems, door and roof strengthening, garage door bracing, and a safe room. Classes are open to the public, but registration is required as class size is limited. For more information contact INTACT at 462-2093.